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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY USSR (Latvian SSR)

REPORT

SUBJECT Port of Ventspils

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REFERENCES

This is UNEVALUATED Information

THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

1. From 3 to 10 December 1953, eight naval vessels, between 75 and 80 meters long, were moored in pairs on the west bank of the river in Ventspils harbor. Each ship had one stack and a mast on a step aft of the bridge. On the foredeck of each vessel there was a gun of an estimated caliber of 105 millimeters with a protective shield, and there was a 37 mm twin-mount gun with a protective shield between the foredeck and the bridge. Another gun with a protective shield was located on a platform on the fantail, and there was a similar gun on the deck. Several paravanes lay between the two guns on the fantail.

2. Informant observed another vessel, between 50 and 60 meters long, [redacted] It had two short squat stacks, and one gun on the foredeck. Aft of the foredeck but forward of the bridge, there was a four-barreled machine gun. The bridge structures were slightly rounded and interrupted by a step. A mast with a yard, with a curved radar scanner above the yard, was located aft of the bridge. The forward stack projected from the bridge structure. A short pole mast was located aft of the second stack, and a gun of an estimated caliber of 75 millimeters was located on the fantail.

3. Three [redacted] submarines were also observed in the harbor. Two of the submarines had an estimated displacement of 2,500 tons each; they had a streamlined bridge and no armament on deck. The third submarine displaced between 500 and 750 tons. A gun of an estimated caliber of 105 millimeters was located forward of the conning tower, which was slightly curved at its forward end and was "stepped" aft.

4. Three or four small guard vessels, about 25 meters long, were moored outside the harbor. They had a continuous deck, a small gun on the foredeck, a box-shaped bridge with a pole mast, a small superstructure amidships, and a machine gun aft of the superstructure. Two unarmed obsolete naval vessels were moored upriver from the naval harbor; they seemed to serve as accommodation ships.

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5.  the eight large ships (para. 1) put to sea several times and returned. They maneuvered alongside the pier at between 6 and 6.5 knots and came to a full stop in about six or ten seconds. When they were going full speed astern, the propeller wash flowed past the bow. One of the vessels, when coming in to tie up outboard of another vessel, approached the inboard vessel at 6 or 6.5 knots; it came to a full stop and made fast without without any further maneuvers. Informant noticed that these vessels could turn in their own length and he concluded that they had twin propellers.

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